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STATUS OF THE VITAL DOCUMENTS PROGRAM

1 March 1951

I. THE VITAL DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

- a) The interim Vital Documents Repository houses 46 safe file cabinets (24 4-drawer cabinets, 22 IBM cabinets) which contain approximately 100 linear feet of documents, 1,000,000 IBM index cards, and 400 reels of microfilm. Twelve map cabinets, which house the vital documents of the ORR/Geographic Division and the map negatives of the NIS program, have never been moved from the [redacted] Shipment of this material depends on the completion of the construction work at the permanent repository, and the subsequent availability of space.

II. CONTROL OF THE MATERIAL IS ADMINISTERED AS FOLLOWS:

- a) Placed in a master safe in the repository are code sheets which (1) identify the source of the material and its location in the files; (2) list the combinations of all safes; and (3) index, by key word, the subject content of the files.
- b) Official access to the files is limited to [redacted] OC/RVD, and his Alternate, [redacted] Office representatives contact [redacted] directly on all matters relating to the repository.
- c) Certain sensitive units (OPC, OSO, SSS, and SRC) are authorized to have an Office Representative accompany material to the repository; however, in each case either [redacted] or [redacted] must escort him.
- d) An official chronology is maintained by the OC/RVD which records important events concerning vital documents operations.
- e) The Security Office is kept fully advised on all matters connected with the activity.

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III. CONTINUITY OF MATERIAL

- a) All Offices have contributed material at least once since August 1950.
- b) No special schedule has been established; responsibility rests with the Offices for determining when new material should be forwarded. They were initially advised that monthly trips would be made.
- c) Offices make contributions by forwarding material on a continuing basis to the OC/RVD. The material is stored in "M" Building and trips are made to the Repository to perform the required integrations whenever necessary.
- d) The Covert Offices, OGD (Intelligence publications and IBM Index Cards), and Management (Tables of Organization) have been regular contributors.

IV. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- a) A clear cut statement should be issued to all Offices that will (1) appoint an Agency OC/RVD and outline his authority, and (2) request each Office to re-examine its obligations under the VD program.
- b) A decision should be made on the exact location of the final repository. Factors to be considered include:
 - (1) location must be sufficiently dry and free from flood danger—controlled heating and ventilation,
 - (2) area selected must take into account the current and emergency needs for adequate IBM, reproduction, and other mechanical equipment, (3) there should be an adequate power supply capable of supporting continuous operation of such equipment, and (4) the area should offer good cover.
- c) A date should be set, as soon as possible, for the transfer of the VD Collection from the Interim Repository to the Final Repository. Factors to be considered include:
 - (1) Interim Repository cannot accommodate more material,
 - (2) corrosion and deterioration of safe files cannot be

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successfully arrested in present location, (3) useful arrangement of material is hampered by lack of adequate space and, (4) the move will require several weeks of planning.

- d) Additional personnel should be made available to manage the Final Repository and guarantee that a continuous, scheduled flow of current material is maintained.

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2 March 1951

Joe

1. At your request I have prepared a brief status report on the Agency's Vital Documents Program.

2. As I mentioned yesterday, the responsibilities assigned to OCD for the Vital Documents Program were transferred to Administrative Services on 11 December 1950. Mr. Peel has asked me, however, to continue to serve as Officer in Charge, Repository for Vital Documents (OC/RVD) until he is able to recruit a person for the job.

3. If there is anything more I can do to be of help to you or please let me know.

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JOE